

# Learning Power

## *Essential Information for Students and Parents*



Funded by the National Math and Science Initiative through support from Exxon-Mobil, the Learning Power program makes cash incentives available to South Dakota students who take online Advanced Placement math, science, and English courses and score 3 or higher on the College Board end-of-course exams. Here are nuts and bolts about the program.

### Eligibility

- Public high school students (or home-school or private school high school students accessing the Learning Power program through a public high school) are eligible to participate in Learning Power. The Learning Power AP coursework will be challenging so a solid academic background in the identified content area will be essential. Having students enrolled in AP courses via distance learning is NOT new; however, offering students cash awards for high scores on College Board end-of-course exams IS new!

### Learning Power Courses

- Via the South Dakota Virtual School, the Learning Power program offers seven online courses:
  - AP Calculus AB
  - AP English Literature & Composition
  - AP English Language & Composition
  - AP Biology
  - AP Physics B
  - AP Statistics
  - AP Chemistry

### Registration and Participation Process for 2008-2009

- 1) The student contacts the guidance counselor, principal, or other designated high school official to indicate their interest in the Learning Power program. The school official confirms the student's eligibility. With the support and assistance of the school official, the student is registered for the Learning Power course or courses via the South Dakota Virtual School website. To ensure placement in Learning Power, students must be registered by May 15, 2008.
- 2) The student participates in the online course or courses throughout the 2008-2009 school term.
- 3) The student takes the College Board end-of-course exam or exams in spring of 2009 upon completion of the course or courses.
- 4) In mid-July, the local high school is notified of student's score on the course exam.
  - a. If the student scores 3 or higher on College Board exam, Learning Power provides the funds for the school to issue a cash award in the amount of \$100 payable to the student. The award is paid in August of 2009.
  - b. If the student scores lower than 3, the student does not receive a cash award.

### Costs Associated with Learning Program Courses and Awards

Students do NOT incur costs for participating in the Learning Power program:

- Enrollment and participation in Learning Power courses is provided at NO COST to students.
- College Board end-of-course exam fees are covered by the Learning Power program.

- Cash awards for students are covered by the Learning Power program.
- Textbooks and related materials are to be provided by the local school district.

## Considerations for Assessing Students' Potential for Success

Many students will be attracted by the opportunity of earning cash awards for excelling in the Learning Power program. Thus, it is important that students possess an accurate perception of their readiness and the significant effort required for successful participation in online AP courses in math, science, and English. To that end, the following considerations are offered as data points and guidance for assessing students' potential for success and engaging students in meaningful discussions about Learning Power participation. The probability for success is heightened if a student:

- Possesses a strong knowledge base in subject matter content, that is, math, science, or English, as appropriate.
- Demonstrates personal responsibility and study skills necessary for a more-independent learning experience.
- Has access to supports such as a local teacher or mentor when needing a sounding board or direction about course assignments.
- Has access to an adequate technical configuration at school and/or home for participating in an online course effectively.

## Technical Requirements for Learning Power Participation

Successful student participation in online AP courses should be supported by access to high speed internet and the following hardware and software configurations:

	Laptop or Tablet PC	Desktop PC
<b>Processor</b>	1.2 GHz or higher	1.8 GHz or higher
<b>Memory</b>	1 Gig	1 Gig
<b>Hard Disk</b>	80 Gigabytes	80 Gigabytes
<b>Video Card</b>	1024 X 768 Resolution	1024 X 768 Resolution
<b>Network Hardware</b>	10/100 Mbps Ethernet Card	10/100 Mbps Ethernet Card
<b>Office Suite</b>	MS Office 2000 or later	MS Office 2000 or later
<b>Operating System</b>	Windows XP Service Pack 2 or later	Windows XP Service Pack 2 or later
<b>Anti-virus</b>	Symantec anti-virus or comparable	Symantec anti-virus or comparable

## Contact Persons for Learning Power Program

- Dr. Jim Parry, Learning Power program director, or MaryLou McGirr, Learning Power program coordinator, are available to answer questions by phone at (605)394-1876 or via email at [jparry@tie.net](mailto:jparry@tie.net) or [mmcgirr@tie.net](mailto:mmcgirr@tie.net), respectively. The mailing address for Learning Power is 1925 Plaza Blvd., Rapid City, SD 57702.